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"The NEW HUMANITY" • Avatar MEHER BABA

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Avatar MEHER BABA'S

MESSAGE:

"The New Humanity"

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1964

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DEDICATION

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AVATAR MEHER BABA'S MESSAGE "THE NEW HUMANITY"

AS IN THE GREAT CRITICAL PERIODS OF HUMAN HISTORY, humanity is now going through the agonizing travail of spiritual rebirth. Great forces of destruction are afoot and might seem to be dominant at the moment. But constructive and creative forces, which will redeem humanity, are also being released through several channels. And though the working of these forces of light is chiefly silent, it is eventually bound to bring about those transformations which will make the further spiritual sojourn of humanity safe and steady. *It is all a part of the Divine Plan, which is to give to the hungry and weary world a fresh dispensation of the eternal and only Truth.*

At present, the urgent problem with which humanity is faced is to devise ways and means of eliminating competition, con-

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flict and rivalry in all the subtle and gross forms which they assume in the various spheres of life. Military wars are, of course, the most obvious among the sources of chaos and destruction. However, *wars in themselves do not constitute the central problem for humanity, but are rather the external symptoms of something graver, which is at their root.* Wars and the suffering which they bring cannot be completely avoided by a mere propaganda against wars; if they are to disappear from human history, it is necessary to tackle their root-cause. Even when military wars are not being waged, individuals or groups of individuals are constantly engaged in *economic or some other subtle form of warfare;* and the military wars, with all the cruelty they involve, arise only when these underground causes are aggravated.

The root-cause of the chaos, which precipitates itself in wars, is that most persons are in the grip of egoism and selfish considerations; and they express their *egoism and self-interest* individually as well as collectively. *This is the life of illusory values in which men are caught.* To face the Truth is to realize that life is one, in and through its manifold manifestations; and to have this understanding is to forget the limiting self in the realization of the unity of life.

With the dawn of this new understanding, the problem of

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wars would immediately disappear. *Wars have to be so clearly seen to be both unnecessary and unreasonable that the immediate problem would not be to stop wars, but to wage them spiritually against the attitude of mind responsible for such a cruel and painful state of things.* In the light of the truth of the unity of all, life co-operative and harmonious becomes natural and inevitable. Hence, the chief task before those who are deeply concerned with the rebuilding of humanity is to do their utmost in dispelling the spiritual ignorance which envelops humanity.

Wars do not arise merely to secure material adjustment; they are often the product of uncritical identification with the narrow interests, which through association, come to be included in that part of the world which is regarded as 'mine'. *Material adjustment is only a part of the wider problem of establishing spiritual adjustment: but spiritual adjustment requires the elimination of the self not only from the material aspects of life, but also from those spheres which affect the intellectual, emotional and cultural life of man.*

To understand the problem of humanity as merely the problem of bread is to reduce humanity to the level of animality. But even when man sets himself to the limited task of securing purely material adjustment, he can only succeed in this attempt if he has spiritual understanding. Economic adjustment is im-

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possible unless people realize that there can be no planned and co-operative action in economic matters until self-interest gives place to self-giving love; otherwise with the best of equipment and efficiency in the material spheres, they cannot avoid mutual conflict and insufficiency.

The NEW HUMANITY, which has to emerge out of the travail of present struggle and suffering, will, of course, not ignore science or its practical attainments. It is a mistake to look upon science as anti-spiritual. *Science is a help or hindrance to spirituality according to the use to which it is put.* Just as art, when rightfully expressed, is the expression of spirituality, science, if properly handled, can also be the expression and fulfilment of the spirit. Scientific truths concerning the physical body and its life in the gross world can become a medium for the soul to know itself; but if they have to serve this purpose they must be properly fitted into the larger spiritual understanding which includes a steady perception of true and lasting values. In the absence of such spiritual understanding, scientific truths and attainments are liable to be used for mutual destruction and for a life which will tend to strengthen the chains which bind the spirit. All-sided progress of humanity can be assured only if science and religion proceed hand in hand.

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The coming civilization of The NEW HUMANITY *shall be ensouled not by dry intellectual doctrines, but by a living spiritual experience.* Spiritual experience has a hold on the deeper truths which are inaccessible to mere intellect; it cannot be born of unaided intellect. Spiritual truths can often be stated and expressed through the intellect; and the intellect surely is of some help for the communication of spiritual experience. But by itself, the intellect is insufficient to enable man to have spiritual experience or to communicate it to others. If two persons have had headache, they can co-operatively examine their experience of headache and make it explicit to themselves through the work of the intellect. But, if a person has never experienced headache, no amount of intellectual explanation will be enough for making him understand what headache is. A man must have headache if he is to know what it truly is: and in order that he should understand it, he may have to be hit on the head. Intellectual explanation can never be a substitute for spiritual experience; it can at best prepare the ground for the appearance of that experience.

Spiritual experience involves something more than what can be grasped by mere intellect; and this is often emphasized by saying that it is a mystical experience. Mysticism is often re-

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garded as something anti-intellectual, obscure and confused, or impractical, and unconnected with experience; but in fact, true mysticism is none of these. *There is nothing irrational in true mysticism when it is, as it should be, a vision of Reality as It is; it is a form of perception which is absolutely unclouded; it is so practical that it can be lived every moment of life and can be expressed in everyday duties: and its connection with experience is so deep that, in one sense, it is the final understanding of all experience.* When spiritual experience is described as being mystical, one should not assume that it is something supernatural or entirely beyond the grasp of human consciousness; all that is meant is that it is not accessible to the limited human intellect, unless it transcends its limits and is illumined by the direct Realization of the Infinite. Christ pointed out the way to the spiritual experience when He said: 'Leave all and follow Me.' This meant that man has to leave his limitations and get established in the infinite life of God. Real spiritual experience not only involves the realization of the soul on the higher planes, but also a right attitude to worldly duties and everyday life; if it loses its connection with experience or the different phases of life, what we have is a neurotic reaction, which is far from being a spiritual experience.

The spiritual experience, which shall enliven and energize

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the NEW HUMANITY, cannot be a reaction to the stern and uncompromising demands of the realities of life. Those who do not have the capacity to adjust themselves to the flow of life, have a tendency to recoil from the realities of life and to seek shelter and protection in the self-created fortress of illusions. Such reaction is an attempt to perpetuate one's separate existence by protecting it from the demands made by life; and it can only give a pseudo-solution of the problems of life by providing a false sense of safety and self-completeness. It is not even an advance towards the real and lasting solution; on the contrary, it is a side-tracking from the true Path. *Man will again and again be dislodged from his illusory shelters by fresh and irresistible waves of life; and he will invite upon himself fresh forms of suffering by seeking to protect his separative existence through escape.*

Just as a person may seek to hold on to his separative experience through escape, he may seek to hold onto it through uncritical identification with forms, ceremonies and rituals or with traditions and conventions. Forms, ceremonies and rituals, traditions and conventions are, in most cases, fetters to the release of infinite life. If they were a pliant medium for the expression of unlimited life, they would be an asset, rather than a handicap, for securing the fulfilment of the divine life on earth; but they

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mostly have a tendency to gather prestige and claims in their own right, independently of the life which they might express; and when this happens, any attachment to them must eventually lead to a drastic curtailment and restriction of life. *The* NEW HUMANITY *shall be free from the life of limitations and allow unhampered scope for the creative life of the spirit, and break the attachment to external forms and learn to subordinate them to the claims of the spirit.* The limited life of illusions and false values will then be replaced by the unlimited life in the Truth; and the limitations through which the separative life lives will wither away at the touch of true understanding.

Just as a person may seek to hold on his separative existence through escape or identification with the external forms, he may seek to hold it on through identification with some narrow class, creed, sect or religion, or with the division based upon sex. Here the individual may seem to have lost his separative existence through identification with the larger whole. But, in fact, he is often *expressing* his separative existence through such identification, which enables him to take delight from his feeling of being separate from others who belong to another class, nationality, creed, sect, religion or sex.

Separative existence derives its being and strength by identifying

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itself with one opposite and by contra-distinguishing itself from the other. A man may seek to protect his separate existence through identification with one ideology rather than another, or with his conception of the good as distinguished from what he regards as evil. *What we get in identification with a narrow group or section or with some limited ideal, is not a real merging of the separative self, but only an appearance of such merging. A real merging of the limited self in the ocean of universal life involves complete surrender of separative existence in all its forms.*

The large mass of humanity is, however, caught up in the clutches of separative and assertive tendencies; and for one who is overpowered by the spectacle of these fetters of humanity, there is bound to be nothing but unrelieved despair about its future. One must look deeper into the realities of the day if he is to get a correct perspective of the present distress of humanity. The real possibilities of the NEW HUMANITY of the future are hidden to the perception of those who only look at the surface of the world situation; but they *are* there all the same and they only need the spark of spiritual understanding to come into full play and effect. The forces of lust and hate and greed make for incalculable suffering and chaos; but *the one relieving feature about human nature is that, even in the midst of the working of disruptive*

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forces, there invariably exists some form of love.

Even wars require and call upon the existence and exercise of co-operative functioning; but the scope of this co-operative functioning is artificially restricted by identification with a limited group or ideal. *Wars often are carried on by a form of love; but it is a love which has not been understood properly. In order that love should come to its own, it must be free from all its trammels and become unlimited.*

The NEW HUMANITY will come into existence through a release of love in measureless abundance; and this release of love itself can come through the spiritual awakening brought about by the Masters. *Love cannot be born of mere determination; through the exercise of will, one can at best be dutiful.* One may, through struggle and effort, succeed in bringing his external action in conformity with his conception of what is right: but such action is spiritually barren, because it lacks the inward beauty of spontaneous love. Love has to spring spontaneously from within: and it is in no way amenable to any form of inner or outer force. Love and coercion can never go together; but, though love cannot be forced upon anyone, it can be awakened in him through love itself. *Love is essentially self-communicative: those who do not have it, catch it from those who have it.*

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Those who get love from others cannot be its recipients without giving a response which, in itself, is of the nature of love. True love is unconquerable and irresistible; and it goes on gathering power and spreading itself until eventually it transforms everyone whom it touches. *Humanity will attain to a new mode of being and life through the free and unhampered interplay of pure love from heart to heart.*

When it is recognized that there are no claims greater than the claims of the universal Divine Life which, without exception, includes everyone and everything, love shall not only establish peace, harmony and happiness in social, national and international spheres, but it will shine in its own purity and beauty. Divine Love is unassailable by the onslaughts of duality and is an expression of divinity itself; and it is through Divine Love that the NEW HUMANITY will come in tune with the Divine Plan. Divine Love will not only introduce imperishable sweetness and infinite bliss in personal life, but it will also make possible an era of NEW HUMANITY. *Through Divine Love, the* NEW HUMANITY *will learn the art of co-operative and harmonious life; it will free itself from the tyranny of dead forms and release the creative life of spiritual wisdom; it will shed all illusions and get established in the Truth; it will enjoy peace and abiding happiness; it will be initiated in the life of Eternity.*

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